

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2453

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR
SUBJECT: DRUG CONTROL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS-ITALY

REF: A. ROME 846, B. SATE 030997

1. INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFTEL A. CONCERNING WHOLE-
SALE AND RETAIL PRICES OF OPIATES BASED ON CURRENT INFORMA-
TION RECEIVED FROM INP, CONFIDENTIAL SOURCES, UNDERCOVER
NEGOTIATIONS WITH NARCOTIC TRAFFICKERS, AND RECENT
PURCHASES OF NARCOTICS. THIS INFORMATION IS BELIEVED TO
BE ACCURATE AS REPORTED.

2. FOLLOWING INFORMATION OMMITTED IN REFTEL A. REPORTED
AS FOLLOWS:

A. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES AND PROGRAMS - THE ITALIAN
GOVERNMENT HAS SUPPORTED ALL U.S. INITIATIVES IN THE
INTERNATIONAL ARENA TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL CONTROL
OF DRUG TRAFFIC. IN THE PAST THEY HAVE SUPPORTED OUR
INITIATIVE IN THE NATO X COMMITTEE ON THE CHALLENGES TO
MODERN SOCIETY (CCMS) AND INITIATED THE PSYCHOTROPIC
CONFERENCE IN VIENNA.

ITALY, TOGETHER WITH THE U.S., CO-SPONSORED A SERIES OF
IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS TO THE 1961 SINGLE CONVENTION, AND
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WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE U.S. IN GAINING ACCEPTANCE OF
THEM BY THE ECOSOC. ITALY HAS ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO THE
U.N. NARCOTICS CONTROL FUND AND HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MORE
AGGRESSIVE MEMBERS IN THE "POMPIDOU INITIATIVE" URGING
GREATER COOPERATION ON NARCOTIC MATTERS AMONGST THE
EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET COUNTRIES.
UNDER NEW ITALIAN LAW THE GOVERNMENT HAS FURTHER

INDICATED THEIR INTENTION TO ASSIGN NARCOTIC OFFICERS TO THEIR EMBASSIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO INCREASE COOPERATION IN STEMMING THE ILLICIT INTERNATIONAL FLOW OF NARCOTICS.

ON DOMESTIC ENFORCEMENT, ITALY CONTINUES TO BE PLAGUED BY ENFORCEMENT PRIORITIES OTHER THAN NARCOTICS--KIDNAPPINGS, TERRORIST ACTIVITY, POLITICAL UNREST, ETC.--WHICH CONSEQUENTLY REDUCES AVAILABILITY OF MANPOWER AND RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO ENFORCEMENT OF NARCOTIC LAWS ON A SIGNIFICANT LEVEL. HOWEVER, RECENT ENCOURAGING ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AND COOPERATION HAS BEEN NOTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE NEW ITALIAN COORDINATING UNIT D.A.D. THIS NEW UNIT CREATED UNDER THE NEW DRUG LAW OF DECEMBER 22, 1975 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COORDINATION OF ALL NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS BY THE VARIOUS ITALIAN POLICE SERVICES IN ITALY.

UNDER THE ABOVE NEW DRUG LAW PENALTIES FOR ALL NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES POSSESSED FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY (USUALLY UNDER 1 GRAM) HAVE BEEN DECRIMINALIZED. A DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN USER AND TRAFFICKERS OF DRUGS IS IDENTIFIED IN THE LAW AND THE NEW LAW ALSO HAS INCREASED PENALTIES FOR MAJOR TRAFFICKERS FROM A MAXIMUM OF 8 TO 20 YEARS IMPRISONMENT.

THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION AMONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO STRINGENT NARCOTIC CONTROL EFFORTS.

B. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT-ITALY, AT THE PRESENT TIME, HAS LITTLE DIRECT IMPACT ON THE U.S. DRUG MARKET. ITALY HAS DEVELOPED INTO A CONSUMER NATION IN REGARD TO DRUGS IN GENERAL AND AS A TRANSIENT COUNTRY FOR ASIAN HEROIN
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DESTINED FROM THE FAR EAST TO NORTHERN EUROPE.
U.S. INITIATIVES MAY BEST BE REALIZED BY ENCOURAGING CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN ITALY AND HER EUROPEAN NEIGHBORS IN THE AREAS OF NARCOTIC INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE--JOINING ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS AND REGIONAL TRAINING. THE U.S. SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT, BOTH TECHNICALLY AND OPERATIONALLY THE EFFORTS OF THE NEW ITALIAN CENTRAL NARCOTIC UNIT D.A.D. ADDITIONALLY, ATTEMPTS SHOULD BE MADE TO ENCOURAGE AND GENERATE GREATLY NEEDED SOCIAL PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD OF DRUG PREVENTION AND REHABILITATIONS.BEAUDRY

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